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SUBJECT: UN SECOND COMMITTEE CONCLUDES WORK, ADOPTS ELEVEN  
RESOLUTIONS ON DECEMBER 8

REF: A. STATE 196546 (NOTAL)

[1](#)B. STATE 196992 (NOTAL)

[1](#)1. Summary: Concluding its work for 2006, the United Nations General Assembly Second Committee on economic and financial affairs adopted ten resolutions and one decision by consensus and voted (at EU insistence) on a resolution on global climate change during action on December 8. UN Under Secretary General Jose Ocampo and the Second Committee Chair

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gave closing remarks in which they thanked delegates for passing more than 40 resolutions, while hoping that next year the Committee might restore the tradition of consensus on such contentious issues as trade and climate change. The Second Committee resolutions and reports will be acted upon by the UNGA in plenary session on December 20. End Summary.

No Consensus on Climate Change  
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[1](#)2. The most contentious resolution of the day was on global climate change, A/C.2/61/L24/Rev.1, primarily over the fact that the Group of 77 countries (G77) refused to entertain a cluster of EU amendments. After Japan and the U.S. voted against an operative paragraph (OP 10) with potential future program budget implications (it was adopted 108-2), the EU then called for a vote on the entire resolution, which passed 114 (US) - 0, with 49 Abstentions and 29 not voting. The abstentions came primarily from the EU and CANZ (Canada, Australia, and New Zealand).

[1](#)3. The representative of Japan explained his vote against OP 10, saying that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was an independent body with its own budget and secretariat, thus the UN should not be asked to shoulder its

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expenses, as OP 10 implied it could.

[1](#)4. Explaining why the Group of 77 countries (G77) had pulled the plug on further negotiations on the resolution and instead re-introduced its original text with a few modifications, the South African delegate said, "Attempts were made to break up the G77 by a group of states." She added, "The G77 has shown extreme flexibility, and it is unimaginable that anyone could vote against such a resolution, or even abstain, on such an issue that affects the whole planet." The G77's remarks were directed at the EU, which nevertheless announced it could not support the resolution in the face of the G77's unwillingness to engage further in negotiations. CANZ likewise announced its decision to abstain on procedural, rather than substantive,

grounds. (Comment: One EU delegate told us they would have a simple task explaining their abstentions in capitals by noting the resolution was "acceptable to the U.S." End Comment.)

## Globalization and Interdependence

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15. A/C.2/61/L.69, the role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence, was approved by consensus, but with several Explanations of Position (EOPs). Speaking for the EU, the Finnish representative stressed that next year's discussion on globalization should encompass both benefits and challenges alike, rather than singling out a specific theme. She also said that future reports by the Secretary General should avoid espousing theories that took multilateral rules as inimical to development. USDEL (ref A) called for this issue to be addressed biennially, rather than annually, and noted that since "all resolutions in the Second Committee address specific aspects of globalization," a themed globalization resolution was "redundant." South Africa, speaking for the G77, responded with the oft-heard refrain that good governance and sound economic policies in developing countries were contingent on what took place at the international level.

## Caribbean Sea Resolution

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16. While the U.S. joined consensus on A/C.2/61/L.67, Sustainable Development in the Caribbean Sea, USDEL (ref B) highlighted two aspects of the text in an EOP. First, USDEL questioned the new formulation "special area in the context of sustainable development," since "special area" is a term with particular legal implications. Second, regarding OP5, "accidental release of hazardous waste" is only a violation of international rules when such rules provide.

## Cote d'Ivoire Resolution Withdrawn

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17. Resolution A/C.2/61/L.43, special economic assistance to Cote d'Ivoire, was withdrawn without action. On behalf of the African Group, the Niger representative said that the Group had wanted to bring the dumpers of toxic waste in Cote d'Ivoire to justice, but that during negotiations some delegates had "emptied the document of any sense," particularly regarding legal provisions. The resolution had been tabled after relevant deadlines had passed, was handled in an exceptionally unorthodox manner, and had a text that was deemed so deeply flawed by such a wide array of delegations that negotiations proved fruitless.

## Consensus on Eight More Resolutions

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18. The Committee adopted by consensus eight other resolutions and one document:

A/C.2/61/L.68 Report of the Governing Council of the UN Environment Program  
A/C.2/61/L.66 UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty  
A/C.2/61/L.60 Implementation of Agenda 21  
A/C.2/61/L.29/Rev.1 International Year of Biodiversity, 2010  
A/C.2/61/L.55 Combating desertification  
A/C.2/61/L.61 Convention on biological diversity  
A/C.2/61/L.62 Landlocked developing countries  
A/C.2/61/L.65 Industrial Development Cooperation  
A/C.2/61/L.59 (document) Draft Program of Work for the 62nd Session of the General Assembly

## U/S Ocampo and Chair Give Closing Remarks

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¶9. UN Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs Jose Ocampo said in his concluding remarks that the more than 40 resolutions adopted this year by the Committee constituted a significant contribution to the Millennium Development Goals. He noted that no consensus had been reached on trade or climate change, and said that this reflected a growing gap, particularly in the field of trade. Ocampo stressed the need to conclude the WTO Doha round both soon and successfully.

¶10. The Chair of the Second Committee (the Estonian PermRep), summing up the Committee's work this year, pointed out that this had been the third year running in which no consensus had been reached on trade resolutions. She exhorted the delegates to not let such a practice become the norm, particularly since Second Committee was traditionally a "consensus Committee." She also remarked that at a meeting of the bureaus of the Second and Third Committees, it was felt that many agenda items cut across both Committees -- particularly those to do with the advancement of women, the eradication of poverty, and the role of the private sector in helping to achieve international development. She said that joint informal events might be considered next year to foster mutual understanding of both Committees. The U.S. and other delegations made concluding remarks expressing appreciation to the Bureau and Secretariat for helping the Second Committee conclude its work within the appointed timeframe -- a rarity in recent years.

¶11. The report of the Second Committee, containing all of the resolutions it approved this session, will be acted upon by the UNGA in its plenary session on the afternoon of December

¶20. The Department's assistance throughout the three-month work cycle of the Second Committee is highly appreciated.

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